

Message Text

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17/12

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02

AID-05 MC-02 OMB-01 /064 W
----- 036050

R 210421Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9274

INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY KABUL

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORRECT NUMBERING OF PARAGRAPHS 1.
THROUGH 6. VICE 1. THROUGH 7.)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT OPPOSITION
PARTIES TO BOYCOTT PESHAWAR BY-ELECTION

FOLLOWING RECEIVED FROM CONSUL, PESHAWAR:

1. UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT OPPOSITION LEADERS DECIDED
LAST WEEK NOT TO PERMIT ANY OF UDF'S COMPONENT PARTIES
TO PARTICIPATE IN FORTHCOMING APRIL 6 BYAELECTION IN
PESHAWAR TO FILL VACANCY IN PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY CAUSED
BY DEATH OF HAYAT SHERPAO.

2. UDF DECISION WAS ANNOUNCED MARCH QT BY PROFESSOR
GHAFOOR AHMAD, UDF GENERAL SECRETARY, FOLLOWING MEETING
OF FRONT'S ACTION COMMITTEE AT SMALL VILLAGE OF
SAEEDABAD, 10 MILES NORTH OF PESHAWAR. (PRESENT AT
MEETING WERE LEADERS OF ALL UDF PARTIES, INCLUDING "DEFUNCT"
NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY, WHICH WAS REPRESENTED BY, AMONG
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OTHERS, MNA GHULAM FAROOQ, SENATOR ZAHURAL HAQ AND,

AS HONORED GUESTN VETERAN RED SHIRT LEADER ABDUL
GHAFFAR KHAN.)

3. IN THIS STATEMENT EXPLAINING UDF BOYCOTT, CHAFOOR
AHMAD CLAIMED THAT NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS TAKEN
SINCE DEATH OF SHERPAO HAD UNDERMINED DEMOCRATIC
PROCESS TO SUCH EXTENT THAT IF POINTLESS FOR OPPOSITION
TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATING IN ELECTIONS. SPECIFIC
ACTION HE REFERRED TO INCLUDED: A) GOVERNMENT'S
ANACTMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS AIMED AT
CURTAILING POWER OF OPPOSITION; B) POLICE RAIDS ON
STUDENT HOSTELS AIMED AT UNCOVERING ARMS AND AMMUNITION,
WHILE, IN FACT, ARMS WERE "BOUGHT FROM SOMEWHERE ELSEVZ
C) GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO CALL NWFP ASSEMBLY INTO
SCHEDULED SESSION ON MARCH 3; D) HARSH ACTION TAKEN
AGAINST INNOCENT PEOPLE FOLLOWING SHERPAO'S DEATH,
INCLUDING "POLICE-PROTECTED" ATTACKS ON OPPOSITION
OFFICES AND SHOPS AND HARASSMENT OF RELATIVES OF THOSE
WHO HAD FLED NWFP.

4. IN SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCE SAME DAY IN SAEEDABAD, MAULANA
MUFTI MAHMUD, ACTING LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY, MOUNTED ATTACK ON GOVERNMENT FOR IMPOSITION
IN CITIES OF PESHAWAR AND MARDAN OF SECTION 144 OF
PAKISTAN CODE (BANNING ASSEMBLIES OF FIVE OR MORE
PERSONS). HE CLAIMED THAT GOVERNMENT HAD USED SECTION
144 INDISCRIMINATELY TO BLOCK NORMAL PROCESS OF DEMO-
CRACY AND TO STIFLE VOICE OF OPPOSITION. ALLEGING
THAT USE OF SECTION 144 DURING BY-ELECTION CAMPAIGN
IN PESHAWAR WAS INSULT TO CONSTITUTION, HE PROMOSD
THAT OPPOSITION WOULD BREAK BAN ON PUBLIC MEETINGS
"IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN DEMOCRATIC PROCESS" IN COUNTRY.

5. GHAFOOR AHMAD ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT UDF WOULD HOLD
CONVENTION IN LAHORE MARCH 21 WHICH WOULD BE ATTENDED
BY ALL OPPOSITION MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,
SENATE, AND ALL FOUR PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES. GHAFOOR
EXPLAINED FURTHER THAT UDF ACTION COMMITTEE HAD
DECIDED THAT FRONT'S LEADERS WOULD SOON UNDERTAKE
TOURS OF ALL FOUR PROVINCES. TOUR OF NWFP, HE SAID,
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WOULD BEGIN ON APRIL 1.

6. COMMENT: ACCORDING REPORTS REACHING CONSULATE
FROM SAEEDABAD MEETING, UDF LEADERS ARE OF OPINION
THAT PARTICIPATION IN PESHAWAR BY-ELECTION - WHICH
GOVERNMENT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE WON IN ANY CASE -
OF LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE TO UDF AND WOULD MERELY DEFLECT
FRONT FROM MAINTAINING MOMENTUM OF THEIR ANTI-BHUTTO

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN, WHICH THEY BELIEVE HAS
BEEN GAINING SUPPORT IN MANY PARTS OF COUNTRY SINCE
GOP COUNTER-MEASURES FOLLOWING DEATH OF SHERPAO.
BYROADE

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